

BULLETIN OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

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A CLASS

EXPERT GUIDANCE TO THE MUSEUM

AS the BULLETIN is constantly filled with illustrations and descriptions of new accessions, readers may easily reach the conclusion that the present chief activity of the Museum is mere acquisition. Important as is the acquisition of objects of art, it is only one of the educational functions of our Museum. Interpretation of these objects of art is another. Some visitors are qualified to be their own interpreters; most

visitors are not. Even those who are, suffer loss of time in finding what they most wish to see, or, perhaps, fail to find it altogether.

The rapid increase in our collections and the frequent rearrangement inherent to our healthy growth prevents any catalogue from being a perfect guide, even for a short time after publication. Our catalogues may be out of date before they have left the press. Even the old habitu  of the Louvre or the Uffizi may now need help to discover what he once was sure to find in the Salon Carr  or in the Tribuna.

Much more is the need of expert guidance to find the way through our changing galleries, still greater the need of teachers and students who are increasingly using our collections as their text-book—a use we earnestly wish to encourage.

Out of this situation has developed our system of "expert guidance." It is not peculiar to our own Museum. The Boston Museum of Fine Arts and our own New York Museum of Natural History have both anticipated us. But in each case such guidance has developed naturally as a means toward a desired end, without any initiative intention. And do not confuse it with the blatant guide, "official" or "unofficial," who importunes your attention at the entrances to European galleries.

The following modest notice has appeared in small type on the last page of our BULLETIN for the past two years:

Members, visitors, and teachers desiring to see the collections of the Museum under expert guidance may secure the services of the member of the staff detailed for this purpose on application to the Secretary. An appointment should preferably be made.

This service will be free to members and to teachers in the public schools, as well as to pupils under their guidance. To all others a charge of twenty-five cents per person will be made, with a minimum charge of one dollar an hour.

Please notice that Museum Instructor—the title of the member of our staff who performs these duties—is our New York way of spelling what in Boston they write "Docent." It is an humble title, chosen by Mrs. Lucy O. Perkins, who so successfully filled the place in the first instance, and continued at her desire by Miss Marion E. Fenton, its present incumbent; but it means the same thing as its more logical Boston equivalent.

The demand for this service, unadvertised as it is, has so grown that it reached the following proportions in the months of April and May last past:

	April	May	Totals
Members and Visitors.....	220	342	562
Teachers and pupils.....	182	296	478
Total number appointments.	40	31	71

Besides these, the following art schools and art departments, which were invited

to see the new wing of Decorative Arts, sent 253 of their pupils:

- May 2 Teachers College
Pratt Institute
- May 3. Young Women's Christian Association
N. Y. School of Applied Design
- May 9. Cooper Union
School of Industrial Art and Technical Design for Women
- May 10. Manhattan Trade School for Girls
Ethical Culture School

But statistics do not describe, and the real inspiration of this revolt from the BULLETIN's monotony of new acquisitions, is a most appreciative article in the April Outlook by Mary-Bronson Hartt, entitled Docentry: A New Profession, from which I am permitted to quote, and which describes our Instructor's work as I should like to have done myself.

"In her little sky-parlor up among the bulging domes over the Fifth Avenue entrance rotunda, Miss Marion E. Fenton, present incumbent of the docentship (though she calls herself simply 'instructor'), told me something of the peculiar fascinations and exactions of her field—or fields, I should say—for she shepherds two distinct flocks: teachers and classes from the schools, and, in groups or singly, representatives of the great American public. Far be it from me to say that the work with the school-children is not the more important of the two; but people in general are likely to find more humanly interesting the work for the public at large.

"Infinite variety marks the appeal which the *doctæ* make to the docent. Indeed, they are alike in nothing save in having paid their small fee for an hour of her time. Here is a connoisseur in Chinese porcelains, who really should have applied himself to one of the curators, since it is manifestly impossible for one woman to make herself an expert in every branch of the arts. Here is a group of society women interested in lace, who will spend their hour before the Museum's illustrative collection showing the various stitches on an enlarged scale, where they will learn to distinguish between needlepoint and bobbin lace, and perhaps trace the whole

development of the art from the ancient Coptic down. Here is a party who want to be told what to think of the Hudson-Fulton Collection. Here, again, a modest woman's club which announces a desire to see 'everything which illustrates mediæval history,' which really, you know, is rather a large order! Or here is a man whose one care is to learn who loaned each picture, if loaned it be, and especially how much it cost. And here a thrifty pair who want a comprehensive survey of the Museum with the least possible expenditure of time.

"The problem is to give to each what he wants, and besides that the very best he can be made to take, to show him enough and not too much, to gauge his knowledge so as neither to tell him what he already understands nor to overshoot his comprehension. It requires nice judgment, swift discrimination, tact. People are so deliciously different. One man, fresh from classic lands, scrutinizes every inch of original Greek or Roman marble in the galleries. An hour later comes a group who cry, when steered toward classic sculptures, 'Oh, we're just back from Rome! Don't show us anything *Roman!*' The docent swings between extremes—from those who query, 'Now, really, which is the best painting in the gallery?' prepared to accept her dictum as if writ upon tables of stone, or, 'Do you know every single thing in this Museum?' (which she thanks her lucky stars she doesn't) to embattled souls who appear chiefly concerned lest she shall think they stand in need of information. For the next hour she may be busy guiding about

some appreciative visitor from whom she gets almost as much as she takes.

"By way of concrete illustration of her method, Miss Fenton, when we had finished talking, took me for a little tour in the galleries. In Boston the aim has

been, so far as possible, to allow visitors to lead the way, letting their interest guide them, the docent following to answer questions or offer illuminative comment. At the Metropolitan no attempt is made to veil the agency of the guide. You choose the collection or collections you want to see, and she shows you the cream of them. There's nothing remotely pedagogic in her manner (though, being a Wellesley graduate, with special training at the Teachers College and in Europe, to

say nothing of practical teaching in the Art Department at Wellesley, she might well betray scholastic hall-marks). Nor does she treat you to an array of bald facts. So easy and unconscious is she that you stroll about with her as with a familiar friend, scarcely realizing that the burden of comment rests with her.

"Stopping before a little relief of an Egyptian princess (or was she a goddess?) with a lotus, she says gleefully: 'There, isn't she lovely? The color, I mean—for the relief is exquisitely tinted—and the *naïveté* of the pose?' And later, among the Greek marbles: 'Here's a fragment you don't want to miss. Just see the beautiful modeling of that back.' The back belongs to a headless seated figure (the label suggests it might be Zeus) not more than twelve inches high. You might, particularly if the deadly museum



FOLLOWING UP THE LECTURE

fag had begun to drag at your eyelids, have passed it altogether. Yet it only wants the docent's appreciative word to fire your enthusiasm.

"Another moment and she is calling attention to the tremendous expression of

to bring out, yet so gracefully is her work done that you are scarcely aware that she is not echoing your own ideas. Such delicate docenting' need not startle the self-love of the most sensitive.

"We had presently an illustration of the



A RELIGIOUS SUBJECT

action in a larger fragment—parts, from the waist down, of the figure of a fighting Gaul—or to the exquisite delicacy of a relief of a young horseman, or to the magnificent workmanship of a Roman portrait bust which honors the sculptor more than the sitter, betraying, as it does, the brutal, degenerate type of a Roman gentleman of the second century B.C. You see (the moment it is shown you) all that she wants

need of docents. Drawing near that prime treasure, the wall-paintings from a villa near Boscoreale, the only Pompeiian frescoes out of Italy, unless you count a scrap in the British Museum, we saw not less than six visitors pop into the room, and, darting a bored glance around the place, with an expression which said plainly, 'There's nothing here!' pop promptly out again. Yet not one of

them, led round to the entrance to the cubiculum and made to realize that it is the actual painted wall surfaces of a bed-chamber buried in 79 A.D., with the warped and twisted grating of the ancient window, but would have experienced

girl's robe, seeming to irradiate the very air till the whole picture is bathed in soft bluish light. And again, in the Lady Writing, she called attention to a string of pearls on the table which seems to give the key both to the color scheme and to the



A FAVORITE PICTURE

some thrill and, whether from the historic impulse or the æsthetic, would have lingered. The self-conducted in hundreds pass it by.

"Among the paintings the docent, to show how she works, singled out two canvases by Vermeer. Before the *Girl with the Water Jug* she paused to note how the sunshine streaming through the casement falls upon the rich blue velvet of the

sentiment of the whole. The pearly tints of the flesh and of the pale yellow satin and ermine, the faint suggestion of pearl shape in the girl's face, and the soft luster of the full brow, glints of pearly light which repeat themselves in the jewel cabinet at her elbow, the ribbons in her hair, the nail-heads in the chair back: all carry out the charming conceit.

"In putting all this much more effective-

ly than I have done, Miss Fenton did not once employ the convenient catchword 'tone.' For it is no part of her ambition to train up pseudo art critics, able to pass the debased coin of cant phrases. She will be perfectly satisfied with making people *see*.

"Perhaps you think the points she made about Vermeer are not very profound. They are precisely such as would prove illuminative to a visitor just getting his eyes open. For the more learned the docent will not lack subtler comments, her chief business in life being to adapt herself to her audience.

"So far as she can she steers her charges toward the more important pictures in the galleries; but if their eyes are caught by some bit of palpable gallery play, she will not drag them away unless the painting be positively bad. For she knows that what genuinely interests them will stick in their minds. Accordingly, whether their choice be a significant picture or a trivial one, she tries to show them how to put themselves in sympathy with the artist, to see why he painted the thing, not looking for dramatic effect when he was playing with sunshine, or for action when he was absorbed in the gleam of copper against brass. Where sentiment and the story interest predominate in a picture, no art-for-art's-sake dogma is allowed to spoil the visitor's pleasure; for, after all, some of the world's greatest pictures have told a great story greatly.

"It will be noticed that the docent is not much given to purveying data about schools and centuries. The Museum authorities are not anxious that she should teach the history of art. That may as well be done in a photograph collection as among originals. The docent's concern ends when she has done what she can to put her charges in a position to appreciate what they see.

"However, when she faces the other half of her work—that with the public schools—she is confronted with a task of double difficulty. For such of the supervisors and teachers as need her help at all need to be taught not only to see, to appreciate, but how to pass on that appreciation to others. And here she has

an enticing opportunity. With all that has been written upon the appreciation of art—most of it fascinating reading to those who already have the clue—I am inclined to the opinion that nothing has yet been said which really helps the man in the dark. It is still a virgin field.

"Fearing to rush in with fine words that darken counsel, Miss Fenton is holding back, making as yet but a guarded response to the demands for lectures upon the theory of appreciation which come to her constantly from the teachers in the public schools. The day after I saw her she was to speak to two hundred teachers on the appreciation of the Hudson-Fulton Collection. This under the auspices of the Art League of the Public Education Association. For the most part, however, she is studying the situation at first hand, visiting the schools, talking with teachers and pupils in the course of her daily work among them, and biding her time.

"Meanwhile her hands are full of practical work. Classes in history, classes in literature, classes in drawing—all from the high schools, since no work is attempted with the unnumbered hordes of the grammar grades—pour in upon her, eager for light. And to them she opens the resources of the Museum, making them free of all that may illustrate, enliven, and make real their every-day school work. These she gathers round her in the class room in the basement, a class room fitted with reference library, photographs, and invaluable imported charts, and gives them first an informal talk on the things they are going to see. With true teacher's instinct, she shows them lantern slides of the very objects they will later find in the gallery, thus assiduously rubbing in every point twice over. Then out they go to the exhibition rooms.

"It would be easy to misunderstand what the Metropolitan is doing with these classes in history and literature. It might be supposed to be actuated by a disinterested desire to promote the cause of education in general. The impulse is, however, at bottom æsthetic. When a docent guides about a class interested in Greek drapery from the historic side, you may be sure she

does not let it escape without some insight into the beauty of Greek *carving* of drapery. It is the Museum's one chance to train the eyes of school children to joy in beautiful things; and it is made the most of. Hence the loaning of photographs and lantern slides to the schools, the diligent coöperation with every effort any teacher makes to widen her own artistic horizon. The gain to the more prosaic ends of education is immense. It is none the less incidental.

"One sees at once what material awaits classes in Greek and Roman history—coins and marbles, classical jewelry, household utensils; and drawing classes might well be supposed to be studying historic ornament or the elements of design, busying themselves among the photographs or the textiles. Students of English history zig-zag from collection to collection, picking out here and there a painting or a bit of furniture or an architectural model or a piece of armor like the little old helmet said to have been worn by Joan the Maid. They pore over the cases of historical medals, and even among the lace find some

curious stump-work of the time of Charles I—a wood relief covered with lace stitch bearing the King's emblems: the moth, the caterpillar, and the fountain.

"What is to be done for literature classes one does not so readily imagine until one considers that everything concerns literature which concerns life, and that a class studying *The Song of Roland* would find interest in the miniatures of daily occupation in the Duc de Berri's famous *Book of Hours*, in photographs of mediæval French castles, or even of mediæval French furniture, all of which help to bring the Middle Ages to life.

"Before the boys and girls get through with the high school they will know pretty well what is in the Metropolitan Museum, why such an infinite variety of objects claim a place in an art museum at all, wherein lies the claim of each to be called beautiful, and perhaps a little of how each was made. In other words, they will have gone a long way toward a fair conception of the meaning of that abused word 'art.'"

R. W. DE F.



THE CHILDREN'S FAVORITE PICTURES



AN article in the *Chautauquan* on American Art Museums mentions as the benefits resulting from the establishment of art galleries that "they exert a great influence upon the public taste, present examples for the emulation of the young artists, afford models for those engaged in the industrial arts, and serve as a

final repository for the art wealth of a country." There is not a word, however, about "enjoyment!" After all, is not the chief purpose of an art museum to give pleasure?

Believing that the Museum exerts an influence in the community, much thought has been and is being given to ways and means of reaching the people and particularly of being helpful to the children. Our best guide in this undertaking is to know the visitor's likes and dislikes and then, by encouraging frequent visits, to lead gradually to the enjoyment of more subtle effects.

The records of a librarian in the children's department of a public library show the demands for books made by the younger children, in the order of their popularity, to be as follows: fairy tales, animal stories (including fables), myths, stories of brave deeds and men. Among the older children the boys are interested in books about war, adventure, and biography; the girls, in romance and poetry. About the same classification holds good in the preferences shown for pictures, and it may be of service to record here the names of some of the paintings in the Museum before which the children linger.

Pictures of children and of animals are special favorites with the very young. A little Italian girl, about six years of age, was guiding a friend, who may have been a little younger. Hand in hand they stood before the Charpentier family group by Renoir, looking at the two little girls and the big, friendly dog. The next to hold their attention was *The Vintage*, by Lhermitte, where a little boy is seated in the foreground munching grapes. Thence they took a straight line, without glancing at anything else, to *Rosa Bonheur's Deer in the Forest—Twilight*, and from that to *Day Dreams*, by Couture, where they stood a long time watching the soap bubbles and dreaming their own dreams. This pilgrimage had evidently been made many times by the young Italian guide.

The boys eagerly discuss the battle scenes. *Le Bourget*, by De Neuville, is an endless source of delight. Meissonier's *Friedland, 1807*, is too much the dress parade to hold their attention for long; but, without even a glance at the *Horse Fair*, they go to *Detaille's Defense of Champigny*, and in its action find food for thought. "What's the next thing they'll do?" "I'd look through a hole in the wall and then shoot over it," and similar remarks show that the subject is of vital interest.

It is the subject that is all-important with the child, just as it is with the man who is young in the art of collecting pictures. With a little guidance, however, many can be led to notice color and composition, to look more carefully at nature in order to ascertain the source of the artist's inspiration, and thus to enjoy both nature and art.

The influence of the public school shows among the older children, who seek those paintings with which they have become familiar through reproductions. *Washington Crossing the Delaware*, by Leutze, is used as an illustration in nearly every school history; copies of the *Horse Fair*, by Rosa Bonheur, and of *Joan of Arc*, by Bastien-Lepage, are in many schools, sometimes they are only newspaper clippings pinned to the classroom door, but often large carbon photographs decorating the assembly hall.

Last spring prizes were offered by the Art League of the Public Education Association for the best compositions written by High School pupils about the objects in the Museum. A series of talks was given in the Museum class room, followed by study in the galleries. Some of the children came frequently in order to prepare their compositions, making their own selection of subject and deciding the whys and wherefores of their preferences. The prize winner had selected as her subject *The Knitting Lesson*, by Jean François Millet.

The cultivation of an appreciative audience offers a wide field for activity, one that leads to individual pleasure and at the same time encourages the growth of art in this country; for without encouragement the art plant cannot thrive. Not only must the seed be planted early, but it must be carefully nursed and constantly tended, if we would have the flower bloom in its full glory.

F. N. L.

DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICAL ART

THE ACCESSIONS OF 1909

IV. SCULPTURES IN MARBLE

FRAGMENTARY STATUE OF THE CROUCHING VENUS

PARIAN marble; height, excluding base, 93.5 cm. Restorations: The right foot and a piece of the left leg just above the ankle. When bought the marble was still covered, to a large extent, with a shelly deposit: according to the dealer's statement it had been found in the sea near Pozzuoli.

This is a copy probably made in the early part of the second century A.D. of a statue which we already know in many reproductions and variations.

A poor but well-preserved replica in the

Museo Torlonia (No. 170) shows that the head was turned to the right, the left forearm resting on the left leg and the fingers touching the right thigh (where in our example are holes drilled for their attachment): the right arm crossed the body, and the hand was raised toward the left shoulder. The figure is crouching in a bath under a stream of water supposed to be falling on her.

Professor Klein (*Praxiteles* pp. 270-272) gives a long list of reproductions and variations of this subject. The original from which all are derived seems to have been a marble which in Imperial times adorned the temple of Jupiter in the portico of Octavia—the work of Doidalsas, a Bithynian of the middle of the third century B.C.

It is not obvious what the style of the original really was, because the works which reflect it differ extraordinarily among themselves. In some, the composition of the figure is altered so as to give greater variety to the contour as one walks around it. But even where the original attitude is preserved, the copies vary very strangely in size and treatment.

Of all versions of it, the most famous is the *Crouching Venus* from Vienne, France, in the Louvre, the body of which is elaborately finished and excellently preserved. A full-size cast of this has been placed at the side of ours, as it is interesting and instructive to compare the two. They differ even in proportions. In ours the breadth is about 2 cm. greater at the hips and it is correspondingly bigger at the waist and under the arms. The girth at the waist is some 3 cm. larger, though the body, measured from front to back, is thicker in the Louvre copy. The build of that one is slimmer; ours is broader and flatter. There is a still greater contrast in the modeling; for in the new figure the structure and strength of the body are better brought out, while in the Louvre example the eye is caught by a naturalistic imitation of a model

Owing to various unavoidable delays the marbles purchased by the Museum in 1909 have not yet been published in the *BULLETIN*, with the exception of the *Old Market Woman* (see *BULLETIN* for November, 1909), although they have been on exhibition since the beginning of

this year. They are in Gallery 10 of the first floor, more generally known as the *Boscoreale Room*. Two of the most important are discussed by Mr. John Marshall in the above article, and an account of the others will be given in the next number of the *BULLETIN*.

whose flesh has already lost some of its firmness and lies in thick fat folds around her. As in both these respects the new piece is like, and the Vienne statue unlike, the Cnidian Aphrodite, a figure from which without doubt Doidalsas drew his inspiration, it is probable that the broader and larger treatment is that of the original. Nor do the other copies contradict this conclusion; for though some of them approximate the Vienne statue, one, at least—the fragment from Tyre in the Louvre—closely resembles ours.

The statue by Doidalsas, though lacking the dignity and character of earlier sculpture, supplied an excellent motive for exhibiting the beauty of the body, and for that reason was popular with late sculptors, whether as a work to copy or as a theme to vary.

STATUE OF A LION

Extreme length, 5 feet 3 inches.

The marble is large-grained, not very translucent, and extremely tough. It can hardly be Parian.

Some of the teeth are broken off and the surface is badly injured over the right ribs. Restorations: the ears, the left fore leg for about two thirds of its length, the right fore paw, the left hind leg up to the lower contour of the body, and the right leg to two and a half inches above the hock. The tail lashing his right side was worked separately, as were also the ears.

The restorations are made from a cast of the better preserved lion of the two from the Nereid monument. In ours the legs are slightly bigger.

The limestone group over the gateway in Mycenæ excels any marble lion of Greek date as much as the lions engraved on certain Mycenaean gems surpass in vigor anything subsequent to them. These pre-Hellenic artists must have known the animal in its natural state.

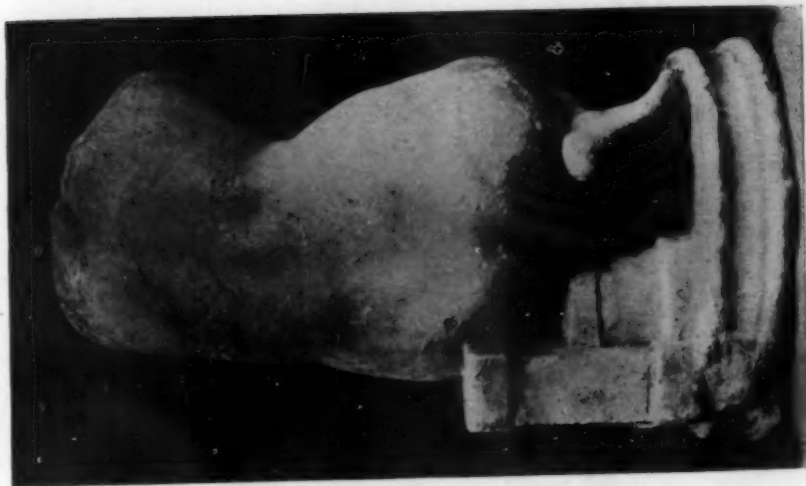
In later times the lion was still found in Asia Minor long after it had ceased to exist in Greece proper; and in the great period of Greek sculpture the best portrayals of it are the work of Asiatic Greeks.

A lion's head with open mouth was the ordinary form for a spout or gargoyle of a

building, and the lion itself was a traditional symbol often placed upon graves. For the former any lion's skin furnished a model, but for a long time the artists of Attica were forced to treat the animal itself in a decorative and conventional manner. Later, when the caged beast was imported for show, there was an opportunity to study its real shape, and doubtless many of the lions dating from the late fourth and third centuries which have been found in Attic cemeteries were made from the life. But their makers, being mostly indifferent artists, subordinated all sculptural qualities to mere resemblance. The Ionians of the fifth century had greater knowledge of the subject than their contemporaries in Greece proper and produced better artists than were the makers of Attic grave monuments two centuries later. They do not limit themselves to mere imitation, but in their works the natural forms are so modified by, or adapted to, the material that the results have a life in themselves which is not to be judged merely by the similitude of the works to nature. The Chimæra in Florence is a real animal, the Nereid lions in the British Museum are real lions, quite as much because they are obviously bronze or stone and not flesh, as because in shape they are like the actual beasts. So our statue might be censured as a likeness, for the head is too small and the foliations of the loose skin round the jaws are more canine than feline. But the fierceness and strength of the animal could hardly be better expressed.

Of the date and school there can be no question. So close is the style to the lions of the Nereid monument and so near are the measurements that at first sight there seems a possibility that the statue might have come originally from the same source. Even in so accidental a matter as the absence of any plastic treatment of the mane under the throat, there is a resemblance. But the material of our lion can hardly be Parian, and besides, there is no place in the Nereid monument for more lions than the four of which fragments were found.

The unworked mane over the throat indicates that the figure stood low, guarding perhaps a doorway, as the Nereid lions are



MARBLE STATUE OF THE CROUCHING VENUS

best restored guarding the entrance to the cella.

The statue is said to have been found in or near Rome. In the album of Pierre Jacques (pl. 78, 78 bis, 79) occurs the drawing of a lioness, which, if the measurements

corresponded, might well be the companion piece to ours. The lioness stood in Rome in the Buffalo Gardens near Santa Maria in Via, until 1575, when it passed into the possession of Cardinal d'Este. Where it is now is unknown. JOHN MARSHALL.





MARBLE STATUE OF A LION
GREEK, FIFTH CENTURY, B.C.



FIG. 1. IVORY DIPTYCH, FRENCH, FOURTEENTH CENTURY

RECENT ACCESSIONS

THE DECORATIVE ARTS

A SMALL beginning has been made, looking to the development of our collections of the smaller decorative crafts of the middle ages (jewelry, bronzes, ivories, and enamels) by the purchase of several early pieces. One of these is a German bronze crucifix of the Romanesque period, made about 1100 (fig. 2), in which the transition from the Byzantine idea of Christ triumphant to the later Italian and northern idea of the suffering Christ is clearly marked. The figure is supported rather than hung upon the cross, the feet resting on a large block which relieves the tension of the arms; the head is bent forward as in the crucifixes of a later date; but the expressive features suggest victory rather than the agony of suffering. When compared with French work of the same period this crucifix is much more primitive in style and rude in workmanship. The reverse of the cross is ornamented with

five discs, the central medallion bearing the figure of the lamb and those in the four arms of the cross inclosing the symbols of the four evangelists. The surface was originally gilt, and it is possible that it may have been enameled, although in Germany bronzes of this kind were often made without the enamel finish.

Another important piece is a bronze candlestick (fig. 3) of twelfth-century French workmanship, which in technique shows greater virtuosity than that of the crucifix, and which in composition is typical of the boldness and elegance of the country and period to which it belongs. A winged sphinx, with erect female head and a tail terminating in a dog's head, supports on its back the stick (now missing) for the candle. It illustrates admirably the freedom of the early art in which human and animal forms are combined with an imagination convincing in its reality, and at the same time it shows to what an extent these forms were used for decorative purposes

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which Christ always stands back of the bed, holding in His arms the soul of the Virgin, symbolized by a small nude child. To us the grace of the figures seems to lend itself more properly to the scenes from the life of the Virgin than to the Passion scenes. In execution, the diptych with the Virgin is perhaps the more refined of the two, and in its deeply cut relief it expresses the plastic feeling better than the other.

Compared with the work just mentioned, a silver gift relief of an apostle shows the steadier and stronger style of the early Gothic period of about 1300. Very likely this piece, which may have belonged to a large crucifix, was made in Italy, if not in Germany.

Three silver plaquettes, inlaid with niello (fig. 4) of Italian fifteenth-century workmanship, are important as examples of the art from which that of engraving on copper plates developed. It was a short step from this form to the engraved plates filled with fluid color instead of the niello, and but one step further to the taking of impressions from these plates. The effect of the plaquettes is very similar to the first Florentine engravings. The figures of the composition are placed against a black net ground and stand out in lighter colors in one plane without any depth of tone. The two round pieces belong to the earliest period of this kind of work, dating from the beginning of the century. They represent two apostles, and probably form part of a series belonging to the ornamentation of a crucifix or a casket. The other, showing two nude figures with some allegorical meaning, is of North Italian origin and belongs to the second half of the century.

A delicate piece of German workmanship in translucent enamel on silver is a thimble, dated 1577, probably made at Augsburg. The top is ornamented with two crests in-

laid on a red background, one with the monogram of Christ, the other with two flowers; the letters V. M. N. (*vergiss mein nicht*) show that it was doubtless intended as a wedding gift. On the band is a hunting scene with two dogs chasing a hare.

To the second half of the sixteenth century, also, belong three pewter plates; one decorated with figures of the Electors, another with the coats of arms of the twelve Swiss cantons, and the third, of an unusual etched technique, with representations of the four Evangelists, by N. Hochheimer. An iron box shows the same kind of etching, much used in South Germany and executed in remarkably fine drawing on this hard material.



FIG. 3. CANDLESTICK, FRENCH, TWELFTH CENTURY

The last of this group of recent purchases is a typical example of the small decorative arts of Spain, a miniature diptych carved in wood illustrating scenes from the Passion and placed on a background of delicate feathers in brilliant blue. The enamel on the outside does not show the finest work, but is very effective, the bright colors being especially characteristic of the rich color effects found in Spanish art of this period. W. R. V.

A CARVED CHAIR FROM THE TYROL.—Furniture of the Romanesque period is no longer in existence, but some idea of its appearance may be derived from pieces found in the valleys of Switzerland and the Tyrol, where the oldest Teutonic forms were preserved as late as the Gothic and Renaissance periods. An interesting example of this kind, recently acquired, is an arm-chair with a movable seat and a reclining back, which would seem to prove that it was used for operating purposes. The back and sides are elaborately carved with coiled serpents having dragon heads, in the style of the Celtic or Scandinavian

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without the naturalistic details employed in later periods to attain a realistic effect. With all its simplicity it reveals clearly the ideas of a great period full of belief in supernatural beings, and the ability of the early craftsman to express this belief with power and beauty not only in the higher forms of art, but in ordinary household utensils.

To the thirteenth century belongs a pyx, or reliquary box, of gilt bronze enameled in different colors, made at Limoges. This form of pyx, with the high roof, was in use during a long period. It was first made in the antique period, was later taken by the early Christian art, afterward by the Romanesque, and it was not until the Gothic period that the shape was completely changed. The present piece represents the end of the development. Reliquaries of this type were made in large quantities at Limoges, but few remain in as good condition as this, with the cross on the top and the bird head lock. It is seldom also that one is found of such charming color, in which the prevailing white tone is used as a background for the medallions bearing the monogram of Christ.

Most valuable acquisitions are two French ivory diptychs of the second half of the fourteenth century, a time when art instilled into subjects of a serious nature a more worldly and joyous sense in compositions harmonious and rhythmic in their lines. Diptychs like these were

made for private devotions in the home or for traveling; they were also used on the small side altars of the churches where they were displayed to the people during Mass. Scenes from the Passion and from the life of the Virgin were especially popular, the

latter being typical of the culture of the fourteenth century, corresponding in a way to the effeminate tendency of the times. In this way our two diptychs are typical examples, one representing four scenes from the Passion, the other the Death and Coronation of the Virgin (fig. 1). In the first the arrangement begins at the bottom on the left with the Flagellation, which is followed by Christ Bearing the Cross, the third group represents the Crucifixion and the Entombment, the scenes terminating at the lower right side, a characteristic arrangement. The composition and the different motives are not inventions of the artist, but are drawn



FIG. 2. BRONZE CRUCIFIX, GERMAN, ABOUT ELEVENTH CENTURY

according to tradition and repeated with variations. In the Flagellation, for instance, the figure of Christ is always chained to a small central column, the feet lightly poised on the ground, and in the Crucifixion the figure of Christ is always turned to the left, while above the cross are seen the sun and moon, sometimes symbolized by two angels. In the Entombment, Christ is invariably held above the tomb by two men while Joseph of Arimathea dresses the wound. The same may be said of the Death of the Virgin, in

art; the motives on the back are more characteristic of the Renaissance—a double eagle surrounded by a circle supported by two lions rampant (similar designs are found in the embroideries and filet work of the Tyrol of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries); the floral sprays be-

tween them were originally derived from Romanesque arrangements, but in their naturalistic form are characteristic of the later Renaissance. This chair, with its tones of polished brown wood, probably dates from the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. W. R. V.



FIG. 4. NIELLO, ITALIAN, FIFTEENTH CENTURY

NOTES

REARRANGEMENT OF THE GALLERIES.—The late Italian pictures belonging to the Museum, together with two loans, have been hung in Gallery 29 in accordance with a plan for the arrangement of the pictures by countries and epochs. The pictures on loan are Lazarus and the Rich Man, an important work by Jacopo da Ponte (called Bassano) belonging to Mr. D. F. Platt, and a spirited battle picture attributed to Borgognone, lent by Mrs. C. C. Ruthrauff.

Roughly speaking, these pictures range from the latter part of the sixteenth to the latter part of the eighteenth century. In Venice, more than elsewhere in Italy, the late painters—the artists of the so-called decadence—were the most interesting. In this small group the Venetians are rep-

resented by The Last Supper, of the School of Tintoretto, belonging to the Museum, by Mr. Platt's Bassano—both among the latest manifestations of the direct tradition of the great time—and by a fair showing of the works of the eighteenth century by Ricci, Tiepolo, and Guardi. In the older paintings the spirit of conservatism is evident; the influence of the great masters appears in the composition as well as in the color, which is rich and sober, though a little pompous, perhaps, in distinction to the gayety of Tiepolo or the blond freshness of Guardi. The paintings by the latter artists make up in charm what they lack in seriousness of purpose. In the three canvases by Tiepolo, here shown, the virtuosity of the craftsmanship and the purity of the flower-like color lead one to forget that the artist's